

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 00660 141157Z
ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0578

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 0660

FOLG RECD AS ACTION DATED JAN 13 PPTD FOR YOUR INFO.

QUOTE.

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRAS 0105

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJECT: GOI PROBING DEATH OF DMK MP IN DETENTION

REF: MADRAS 647, APRIL 7, 1976

1. WE HAVE HEARD FROM A TAMIL NADU GOVERNMENT SOURCE THAT THE GOI HAS DIRECTED THE TAMIL NADU GOVERNMENT TO INQUIRE INTO THE CAUSE OF DEATH OF C. CHITTIBABU, MP AND PROPAGANDA SECRETARY OF THE DMK, WHO DIED IN THE MADRAS GENERAL HOSPITAL ON JANUARY 5. THE DIRECTIVE REPORTEDLY WAS ISSUED AS A RESULT OF SEVERAL REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE DMK THAT CHITTIBABU SUFFERED ABDOMINAL INJURES AS A RESULT OF BEATINGS BY THE POLICE WHEN HE WAS IN MADRAS CENTRAL PRISION AND DIED AS A RESULT OF THE INJURIES. CHITTIBABU WAS ONE OF SEVERAL DMK LEADERS DETAINED UNDER MPEA WHEN PRESIDENT'S RULE WAS IMPOSED ON TAMIL NADU ON JANUARY 31, 1976. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL SOURCES, CHITTIBABU WAS ADMITTED INTO THE GOVERNMENT GENERAL HOSPITAL IN MADRAS IN OCTOBER 1976

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FOR TREATMENT OF INTESTINAL TROUBLE, WAS OPERATED ON FOR STRICTURE IN THE RECTUM TWO MONTHS AGO AND UNDERWENT A SECOND OPERATION ON JANUARY 3. HOWEVER, HIS CONDITION DETERIORATED AND THE OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION STATES THAT HE DIED OF A "HEART AILMENT" ON JANUARY 5 WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL. A HOSPITAL SOURCE CLOSE TO A CONSULATE LOCAL STATED THAT CHITTIBABU'S DIFFICULTIES WERE DUE TO SEVERE BEATINGS WHICH

RESULTED IN MASSIVE INJURIES TO HIS INTERNAL ORGANS. IT IS SAID THAT HIS PROSTRATE WAS SO BADLY DAMAGED THAT A CATHETER HAD TO BE USED TO DRAW OFF URINE.

2. THE DMK HAS NOW MADE HIM A MARTYR AND IS CONDUCTING A WHISPERING CAMPAIGN THAT CHITTIBABU DIED DUE TO POLICE BEATINGS AND THAT THE STATE ADMINISTRATION IS HUSHING UP THE POLICE ATROCITIES. FORMER DMK CHIEF MINISTER KARUNANIDHI, PRESIDING OVER A CONDOLENCE MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE DMK IN MADRAS ON JANUARY 11, DESCRIBED THE LATE DMK LEADER AS A DEDICATED SOLDIER OF THE PARTY.

3. WHILE THE DMK IS ATTEMPTING TO DISCREDIT THE PRESIDENT'S ADMINISTRATION BY CASTING POLICE OPPRESSION AS THE CAUSE OF CHITTIBABU'S DEATH, OTHER SOURCES INFORMED US THAT CHITTIBABU WAS OF IMMORAL HABITS AND WAS A HABITUAL DRUNKARD. THESE SOURCES STATED THAT THE LATE DMK LEADER WAS SUFFERING FROM LIVER TROUBLE AND THAT THE DEATH WOULD HAVE BEEN DUE TO COMPLICATIONS ARISING FROM HIS INTESTINAL AND LIVER COMPLAINTS. HE IS ALSO SAID TO HAVE HAD TWO WIVES AT THE SAME TIME. THIS IS THE SECOND DMK LEADER WHO DIED WHILE IN DETENTION. SIX MONTHS AGO ANOTHER LOCAL DMK LEADER IN TIRUCHIRAPALLI DIED WHILE HE WAS UNDER DETENTION IN TIRUCHIRAPPALI JAIL (REFTEL).
MCCASKILL UNQUOTE
SCHNEIDER

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